Australian Bureau of Statistics

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One in five Australian workers are casual employees

One in five, or 19% of Australian workers were casual employees in November 2011 the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) said today. This represents just under 2.2 million people.

The majority (62%) of employed people were employees with paid leave entitlements, while a further 9% were either independent contractors and a similar proportion were other business operators.

Females were more likely than males not to have paid leave entitlements (23% compared with 16%).

Over half (64%) of all employees in the Accommodation and food services industry did not have paid leave entitlements. Other industries where there was a high proportion of employees without paid leave entitlements included:

- Agriculture, forestry and fishing (48%)
- Retail trade (40%)
- Arts and recreation services (39%).

The occupation with the highest proportion of employees without paid leave entitlements was Sales workers (48%), followed by Labourers (46%). Occupations with a low proportion of employees without paid leave entitlements were Managers (6%) and Professionals (10%).

The ABS also found that there were 605,400 persons (5% of all employed persons) who found their job through a labour hire firm/employment agency in November 2011, of whom 56% were males. Of these, 141,700 persons (23% of those who found their job through a labour hire firm/employment agency) were paid by a labour hire firm/employment agency.

Administrative and support services (20%) and Manufacturing (13%) were the industries with the greatest proportion of those who were paid by a labour hire firm/employment agency, while Clerical and administrative workers (21%) and Machinery operators and drivers (19%) were the most common occupation groups.

In this month's feature article 'Casual employment and conditions are stable', the ABS explores employees without paid leave entitlements (casuals) from 1998 to 2011, showing although numbers are increasing over time, the rights and entitlements of these casuals today are similar to previous years.

More details are available in *Forms of Employment, Australia, November 2010* (cat. no. 6359.0).

Media notes:

- Independent contractors are defined as employed people who operate their own business and who contract to perform services for others under a commercial contract, rather than as an employee under an employment contract. Independent contractors provide a labour service directly to a client, rather than generating their income from managing their staff or from selling goods or services.
- When reporting ABS data the Australian Bureau of Statistics (or ABS) must be attributed as the source.

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